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# Methods of Enlisting Men in Missions

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## TOPICS DISCUSSED.

I. The Pastor's Place of Leadership.

II. The Necessity of a Missionary Committee.

III. The Best Method of Missionary Finance.

IV. The Importance of Public Education by Laymen.

V. The Only Way to Reach Every Member.

VI. How to Maintain and Increase the Missionary Interest When Once Aroused.

VII. How to Promote Prayer for Missions and Missionaries.

VIII. How to Inaugurate the Laymen's Missionary Movement in a Community.

IX. One Way to Develop Lay Leadership in the Church.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In response to many requests, the following suggestions have been published. They have grown out of many Conferences in various cities, conducted by leaders of the Laymen's Missionary Movement. The methods recommended are not meant to interfere with successful plans that may be already in operation in any church; but it is believed that the main points emphasized may be adopted, with advantage, by the great majority of congregations and individuals.

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# METHODS OF ENLISTING MEN IN MISSIONS.

I. The Most Important Single Factor in Producing a Missionary Church is of Necessity the Pastor. For a comprehensive discussion of what a pastor can do, the reader is referred to the book entitled "The Pastor and Modern Missions," by Mr. John R. Mott. The laymen of every church should present this book to their pastor, if it is not already in his library. ($1.00, from the Laymen's Missionary Movement, 429 Confederation Life Building, Toronto). It must be frankly admitted that in some cases the laymen have not only failed to stand by their pastors in an aggressive missionary policy, but have tried to discourage them from the agitation of the missionary problem. The most unfortunate impression which the Laymen's Missionary Movement could produce would be to give any pastor the idea that his leadership in this department is no longer required and essential. It takes a higher standard of leadership to conduct an aggressive campaign, than to remain in the intrenchments. It is hoped that we are now approaching the time when it will be a real army of conquest which the pastors are called upon to lead. If the pastor is on fire with missionary enthusiasm, the victory is in sight, provided the laymen of his church will back him up and cooperate with him. Where he is not yet living with the ambition to lead his church out into great achievements for the world's evangelization, it is wonderful what even a few of the men of his church can do to stimulate this ambition.

(*a*) They can begin by praying, both privately and in groups of two or three, that the missionary spirit may take possession of their pastor.

(*b*) They can encourage their pastor in all that he already does to promote missionary interest, and tell

him that they will stand by him in an aggressive and worthy policy.

(*c*) They can see to it that the best missionary periodicals are available to the pastor regularly, and also a fair supply of the best missionary books.

(*d*) They can send their pastor to a strong missionary convention occasionally, where he will not only receive great inspiration and suggestive material for pulpit use, but also practical suggestions on missionary methods. This is very important.

(*e*) They can relieve the pastor of much burdensome detail in connection with the missionary features of the Church's life, by having a strong missionary committee of men, whose one chief work in the church throughout the year shall be to co-operate with the pastor in producing a church that regards the world as its field.

II. An Energetic Missionary Committee of Men is Essential to the Highest Missionary Efficiency of Any Congregation. Important as is the pastor's position of leadership, no pastor can accomplish single-handed half so much as he can do when supplemented and buttressed by the influence and co-operation of a group of the strong laymen of his congregation. In the nature of the case, the pastor should be an ex-officio member of this Committee, but he should not be its Chairman. No group of church officials should have this duty added to their other work, as a sort of side-issue. It is much better that the rank and file of the congregation, as well as the officers, be represented on the Committee in any case. A Committee of three is probably enough to begin with, but they should have power to nominate additional members as men are found who will take hold of the work seriously. The men on this Committee should be left free so far as possible from other heavy responsibility in the church, as their duties in this department

will give them abundant opportunity for work. The Committee should be officially appointed and have all the influence of the pastor and officers of the church behind their efforts.

### What Should Be the Aim of This Committee?

The Missionary Committee should aim to lead the whole congregation into an intelligent and growing appreciation of the problem of evangelizing the world, to the end that the congregation may exert its largest possible influence through prayer, possessions, influence and life in extending Christ's Kingdom until it becomes universal. It is not merely money which the Committee should work for, but that intelligence, sympathy, outlook and purpose which makes the giving of money natural and necessary. It will be recognized at once that this is an educational and spiritual opportunity of the very first order.

### How Shall This Committee Set About Its Work?

No Committee accomplishes much without the expenditure of time, thought and effort. One evening each month should be devoted to a careful, prayerful study of the situation in the congregation, and the adoption of plans for future work. If the Committee can meet at the home of one of its members for the evening meal together, and then spend an hour or two in the consideration of its work, this plan will be found to possess marked advantages.

The following questions should be before the Committee continuously: How Can We Promote Missionary Intelligence more thoroughly? How Can We Increase the Spirit of Prayer for Missions? How Can We Discover and Develop More Missionaries? How Can We Enlarge Our Missionary Offerings? How Can We Influence our Community and our Denomina-

tion to adopt an adequate Missionary Policy? Experience, observation, and study of the subject will throw fresh light on these questions from month to month.

## What Relation Should this Committee Bear to the Men's Organization, the Sunday School, the Young People's Society, the Women's Missionary Society, and Other Church Organizations?

Some of these organizations will doubtless have their own separate missionary committees. It should be the aim of this Congregational Missionary Committee to study the whole problem comprehensively, and see that in each department of the church's activity the missionary work receives due attention and emphasis. Very valuable literature on Mission Study Classes, Missionary Libraries, Missions in the Sunday School, and kindred topics, can be secured from the Young People's Missionary Movement, 33 Richmond St. West, Toronto, as well as from the Mission Board headquarters.

For the sake of clearness and emphasis, additional features of the missionary policy of a congregation will be considered under separate subjects. In the further discussion of methods, it is assumed that a strong Missionary Committee is in existence to make effective the plans that are recommended. It is vain to expect that any thorough-going missionary policy can be realized, or made permanent in a congregation, without capable, conscientious and faithful work on the part of the men who have the privilege of composing the Missionary Committee. No position of greater influence can be occupied by a member of the church.

III. There Can Be only One Best Method of Missionary Finance, and the Best is None too Good for the Chief Business of the Church.

What method of finance has already proved unqualifiedly the best in enabling churches to provide for their current revenue? The weekly subscription basis, with numbered and dated envelopes in which to pay these subscriptions week by week, has unquestionably proved to be the best method. Why then should we adopt an inferior method for dealing with the missionary finances, by means of which the world is to be evangelized?

It is difficult to understand how the Church could ever have fallen into so inadequate a method as an "annual collection" for the propagation of Christ's kingdom to the ends of the earth. There is only one satisfactory explanation to offer, viz.: that the Church regarded the evangelization of the world as a subordinate issue and not its primary business. Now that a new conception of her duty is beginning to pervade the Church, the "annual collection" is rapidly being superseded by more reasonable and adequate methods. All kinds of half-way measures have been tried by those who have discovered the weakness of the "annual collection," but none of these measures has proved satisfactory. Some have tried a semi-annual collection, others a quarterly collection, and still others a monthly plan, but all are poor substitutes for the ideal plan, viz., *an offering every week, from every member, according to his ability.*

Some who regard the weekly plan as clearly the best method have hoped, by getting a quarterly or monthly plan adopted, to prepare the way for the introduction later of the weekly offering. This is mistaken judgment. There are so many arguments for the weekly method that it is easier and better in every way to come to it directly, instead of experimenting with plans that at best are unsatisfactory.

## What Are Some of the Advantages of the Weekly Missionary Offering?

### 1. First of All, it is the Scriptural Method.

"Bring an offering and come into his courts," Psalm 96:8, is not only the Lord's command, but literally descriptive of the method of offerings in the entire Old Testament dispensation. Their primary purpose in coming to God's house was to present their offerings. And all these offerings were meaningless except as they were brought in the spirit of obedience and worship to God. "Worship the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase," Prov. iii, 9. It is not to the minister or to the officers of the Church that our offerings are to be given, but to God himself. And to withhold them is to rob God and shut the doors of heaven so that spiritual blessings cannot descend upon the Church. "Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye rob me. Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be meat in my house and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it," Mal. iii, 9, 10.

The New Testament endorses this same method of offerings. "Upon the first day of the week, let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper," I Cor., xvi, 2. Taking these and other passages together, it is clear that there is much importance attached to the bringing of the offerings into God's house to be presented to Him. Doubtless one chief reason for this is that it may be more fully in the spirit of prayer and worship. "God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth," John iv, 24. Unless all offerings are in the spirit of worship, their value to the giver is largely lost.

2. This is the Spiritual Method.

The Scriptural method is always of necessity the spiritual method, for it is the method suggested by the Holy Spirit. And experience abundantly endorses the truth of this in the matter of our offerings. One always gets more out of a meeting to which he contributes something. When one makes a few remarks in a prayer meeting, he enjoys the meeting far more as a result. When one brings a worshipful offering to God in a church service, it improves the whole service for him. If one could only afford to give a penny a week, it would be better to give that every week rather than give it all at one time once a year. Habits are tremendously important things. The sum of them equals character. And a habit can scarcely be formed by doing a thing once a year, or once a quarter. But a thing done every week may come to be a second nature.

It ought to be impossible for any Christian ever to attend a service in God's house without thinking devoutly and prayerfully of the whole kingdom of God in the world, of which his particular congregation is only one among a vast multitude of vitally related parts. It will greatly encourage such thought and prayer for the kingdom as a whole, if one's regular weekly offering goes towards the extension of that whole kingdom.

3. This is the Natural Method.

The weekly method has this further to commend it, that it is the natural method. Of course, we mean natural to a spiritual person. To the "natural man" all giving is unnatural. But if one has been born of the Spirit and is being led by the Spirit and walking in the Spirit, it is certainly far more natural for him to make his weekly offering towards the whole work which the Spirit of God is doing in the world, than to

limit his giving to the narrow sphere of his own immediate congregation. To a spiritual person, the whole work of God in the world is infinitely precious, and it is only by the invasion of the selfish and self-centered spirit into the Church that a plan was ever devised limiting the regular opportunities for making offerings to God's world-wide work to one or two occasions in a year.

4. It is the Fair Method.

The divine command is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," Matt. xix, 19. This is made yet stronger by the words of Jesus: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you," John xv, 12. Is it in harmony with such a spirit for us to take up our offerings each week for the maintenance of religious privileges enjoyed almost wholly by ourselves, and confine ourselves to one offering a year in behalf of the vast multitudes to whom the message of Christ has never yet been given?

We have discovered that nothing less than a weekly offering is adequate to the support of the particular church in which we worship. Is the evangelization of the world less important or urgent? Instead of loving others even as Jesus has loved us, and taking up a weekly offering in their behalf, we have in many cases practically said to the starving world, Let the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's tables! We have given what happened to be convenient more often that we have prayerfully asked, Lord, what is really needed? What wilt Thou have me to do? And inasmuch as we did it to the least of His creatures we have done it to the Master Himself. "How long shall we continue to crucify the Son of God afresh, on the cross of our own convenience?"

5. It is the Economical Method.

Among other things, the Church is a gigantic busi-

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ness enterprise. Its affairs should be managed at least as carefully and skilfully as any private business. The necessary expenses of this enterprise go on week after week. Unless support is paid in week by week, money has to be borrowed and interest paid upon it, to keep the vast machinery in motion. Thousands of dollars are wasted every year in this way that would go into the work of extending the kingdom if the weekly offering were generally adopted, and remittances were forwarded each month.

6. It is the most Efficient Method.

Weekly giving is not the only divine principle for financing the kingdom, but it is a fundamental one. It is always easier to take a further step after a start has been made. Proportionate and self-sacrificing giving are repeatedly emphasized in Scripture, but these will both come more readily where the weekly worship of God with one's offering is being practised. Experience is unanimous with reference to the greater efficiency of the weekly offering. It is doubtful whether any congregation will give its maximum in any other way. And while the needs of multitudes of our fellowmen remain so great and so unprovided for, no congregation should be satisfied with anything less than its maximum. In every case the proper introduction of the weekly system of missionary offerings greatly increases the aggregate amount contributed, in addition to getting the help regularly and promptly, as it is needed.

Where the monthly plan has been in successful operation, and has been superseded by the weekly method, it has been found that congregations often give as much per week as they were previously giving per month. Very few members of the Church are too poor to afford ten cents a week to missions. They can be led to give this much gladly if the weekly mission-

ary offering is in operation. Small as this amount is, it would furnish sufficient funds for the whole missionary work of the Church, if the entire membership could be enlisted. Until that time comes, many must give on a far more generous scale. It is as easy to secure ten cents a week from the ordinary Church member as to secure $1.00 in an annual collection, but the weekly amount aggregates $5.20 in a year.

7. The Weekly Offering to Missions Does not Decrease, but Actually Increases, the Offerings to Current Expenses. This may seem strange to "hard-headed business men," but it is true nevertheless. And it is in absolute harmony with the operation of spiritual law. Giving is a grace, to be developed by exercise, just like love, or faith, or any other grace. Nothing else develops this grace so rapidly and effectively as the unselfish spirit of missions. When the grace of giving is once developed, it overflows in every right direction. This is the explanation of the phenomenon that live missionary churches are always the best in paying the salaries of their pastors, and in the support of every worthy Christian enterprise.

### What is the Best Way to Introduce the Weekly Missionary Offering?

If the weekly offering has not succeeded, the failure is traceable either to the poor way in which it was introduced or to the inadequate manner in which it has been worked. It should never be introduced merely by providing envelopes, and announcing publicly what they are for. The people generally need to be shown the necessity for this plan of missionary giving, the entire reasonableness of it, and also its great spiritual value. Of course it will be desirable to show the urgency of the need for enlarged missionary offerings on the part of all the churches in order to evangelize

the world. To this end, a regular church service should be devoted to this purpose. At this service, it will be well to have one or two laymen speak, as well as the pastor.

### Official Endorsement Important.

It is essential to the best success of the plan, that it be introduced with the endorsement of the officials of the Church. It will generally be best to have the whole question discussed in advance with the officers, so that their endorsement can be publicly announced when the plan is being presented to the thoughtful attention of the whole congregation. The officers themselves should always set the example of making their own missionary contributions on the weekly plan. This goes a long way toward securing success in the congregation.

### Have the Envelopes Ordered in Advance.

The Missionary Committee should plan with the pastor for the most opportune time at which to present and introduce this weekly system. As it will take some little time to get the envelopes after they are ordered, they should be ordered in advance and be ready to give to the members when the Committee calls upon them for their pledges.

Three different plans are possible:

1. To have all the offerings of any subscriber placed in a single envelope, indicating on the outside of the envelope the objects to which the amount is to be devoted.

2. Using the duplex envelope, with the offering to current revenue in one pocket, and the missionary offering in the other.

3. Two entirely separate envelopes, one for current revenue and the other for missions.

Probably on the whole the duplex envelope system has proved the most satisfactory in the average congregation.

The Missionary Treasurer should be a member of the Missionary Committee. The Committee should co-operate with the Treasurer, not only in securing the subscriptions when the plan is introduced, but in keeping the plan in good working order.

### Exceptional Cases.

It is not to be expected that every giver will be willing to go to the trouble of making an offering to missions every week. Some very large givers prefer to pay by cheque at irregular intervals. The methods here recommended are not meant primarily for the men who give by the hundred or by the thousand to missionary work, but for the rank and file who so often give nothing systematically. "System not spasm is God's method." Some system should certainly be introduced which will secure some worthy offering from every member of the Church. Nine members out of ten can and will give more on the weekly instalment plan, than on any other.

## IV. The Importance of Public Education on Missions by Laymen.

Laymen are needed not only as givers, but as advocates of an adequate missionary policy. Unofficial advocacy is proving remarkably effective. In addition to all that the minister can say, there is something which the layman can say with peculiar emphasis and influence. If men are to be stirred out of their

accustomed carelessness about missions, it can be done most easily, quickly and certainly if they are appealed to by men of their own class.

The cities that have been stirred on missions have used laymen very largely in the public speaking. The denominations that are being most fully enlisted have learned how to use their laymen as agitators and educators. Before hundreds of individual congregations laymen have spoken, and the results on the whole have been remarkable. It has been demonstrated that there are thousands of laymen in the Church, capable of effective public speaking on this subject, and willing to be actively enlisted in the campaign of education. When once a man becomes an advocate of an enterprise, he studies it with a new interest and thoroughness. In case of such an enterprise as world-wide missions, this must inevitably lead to greatly deepened conviction. This of necessity leads on to a fuller prayer life and larger offerings. In the meantime the man himself discovers that he can be of some real account in the promotion of the Kingdom of Christ. He learns something of the joy of being used to enlist others in a larger service. Spiritual matters become greater realities to him. His whole life widens, and he soon finds himself capable of a many-sided usefulness in the Church.

No one interested in the development of the men of the Church in their own spiritual lives, and into vital factors in extending the Kingdom of Christ, can afford to neglect this greatest of all challenges to a man's conviction, and conscience,—viz., the world's need, and the Saviour's desire. The greatest thing in the world is the world. If the world's needs are not great enough to arrest a man's attention and command his help, he is incapable of being moved by the most imperative call with which God has confronted men.

When once he has been enlisted, he not only gives of his possessions, prayer and life, in larger degree to missionary work, but is a bigger and better and more dependable man in every way for Christian service in his own community. Laymen can be urged to go as personal investigators of missionary conditions. Many have already gone, and are rendering splendid service by their testimony. They can also be used at regular church services, at men's suppers, in prayer meetings and at parlor gatherings of men. Church leaders, whether ministers or laymen, should study ways in which to get as many men as possible to speak out their best convictions on this subject in the presence of their fellowmen. It will soon be discovered, in the process, that in the effort to evangelize the world the Church itself is being revolutionized, and its members are becoming vital factors in the Kingdom that is to be universal and eternal.

## V. A Personal Canvass Is the only Way to Reach and Enlist the Whole Membership.

Only a fraction of the members of the Church are at present supporting, in any serious way, the work of carrying Christianity to the nations of the earth. This explains the utter inadequacy of the Church's missionary efforts. It also means that the Church as a whole has not yet been led to adopt Christ's purpose to save the world.

To change this condition of affairs within the Church, public education is the first step. But it is not the last. No amount of public education will accomplish all that is required. An absolutely essential feature of the educational process is a house to house canvass of the whole membership of the Church for definite personal subscriptions to the work.

### The Canvass Should Cover the Entire Membership.

It is of course easier to circulate subscription cards in the church service and ask the members to make their subscriptions on the spot. There are two objections to this method. Only part of the congregation, generally less than 50 per cent., will subscribe in this way. This leaves the other half to be reached by a canvass, if they are reached at all. Such a canvass is embarrassing, because it is the second approach to a subject that in many cases has been dodged at the church service. There is the further objection that many of those who do subscribe at the church service are apt to put down a far smaller amount than they should give. If they are waited upon by a small committee personally, the whole question will receive much more thorough consideration.

When it is known publicly in advance that the canvass is to cover absolutely the whole membership, no one, rich or poor, being approached in any other way, embarrassment is avoided and far better results are secured.

### This Canvass Should Always Be by Committees, not by Individuals.

Experience proves that canvassing is made much easier, pleasanter and more productive, when at least two men go together. In many cases, three are even better than two. Men should not, as a rule, go alone on this important work. When two or three men go together to see another man on any subject, this fact alone gives an importance and dignity to the question which it would not otherwise command. As questions and difficulties arise, two men can answer them much more satisfactorily and conclusively than one.

It will be found in experience that many important questions will arise, and be answered in this canvass, which all the public presentation of the matter has failed to touch.

The men who engage in the work will also find it a spiritual blessing. Many a man has been introduced into active Christian service along other lines by being enlisted first of all in an active canvass of this sort. If conducted in the right spirit, it will always be a means of spiritual development to the whole congregation.

In all efforts to influence people to give, it should be borne in mind clearly that God does not need money. The silver and gold are His already, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. It would, humanly speaking, be a far easier thing for God to overturn the mountains and fill all the missionary treasuries of the world with the streams of gold now hidden away in the heart of the earth, than to move His people to part with a reasonable share of the bounty with which their lives have been blessed. Why, then, does He not do it? There is a sufficient answer. He cannot reproduce His character in His people in that way. "God is love." "God so loved the world that He gave." His giving was the necessity of His love. Our giving is the measure of our love.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John 3:16. This is the strongest possible way of saying that God's love cannot exist in the heart that refuses the appeal of others' needs.

Giving is a grace, whose healthy development depends on exercise. Selfishness and covetousness are basic tendencies of human nature, and need the anti-

dote of love, with the cultural grace of giving. Love withers and fades, unless it is expressed. Giving is its normal expression. The only way to serve God is to serve our fellowmen. Our love to them is the measure and proof of our love to Him.

Children need this grace developed as well as older people. It is almost, if not quite, as serious a thing to let a child grow up without being taught how to pray as without being taught how to give. Prayer and giving are both vital to normal culture. Let this be insisted upon earnestly in all public education on this subject. And let the plan be abandoned of having the head of the family attempt to do the giving for the whole family. It would be just as reasonable for him to try to do the praying or the eating for the whole family.

Unless a boy learns how to give in childhood or youth, it will be extremely difficult for him, when he grows older, to overcome his natural tendency to selfishness and closeness. The generous habit, like all other habits, is learned most easily in early life.

### Subscription List Larger than Membership Roll.

The number of systematic subscribers to missions in any normal congregation should be larger than the list of members. There are many children in the homes who should be subscribers. There are also many adherents in almost every congregation who will give regularly to missions if asked. This is often the first step towards their uniting definitely with the Church in all of its work.

### Should the Canvass Be Made for Home and Foreign Missions Together?

It is assumed that if the weekly offering is adopted for Foreign Missions, it will also be adopted for the

various Home Missionary interests, at least the most important of them. This is the reasonable and right course to follow.

In the churches where these two departments are administered by a single Board or Society, a single canvass will ordinarily be best. But where there is a Foreign Mission Board, and two or more other Boards dealing with Home Missions, City Missions, Church Erection, etc., the plan which secures the largest returns for all the causes, Home and Foreign, is to have a complete canvass for foreign missions by itself, and perhaps two or three months later a similar canvass for the combined Home Missionary Causes. The subscription card can be so prepared as to allow each individual to divide his subscription among the various Boards as he may choose. In the case of some of the smaller "causes," perhaps an annual collection is the best way to support them. The envelopes, in which the weekly offerings are to be brought in, may be so printed that the donor can designate each week the object to which his contribution is to be devoted. But as a rule it would be understood that the offering is to be divided in the proportions indicated by each contributor on his original subscription card.

### The Budget Method Unsatisfactory.

Not a few business men are inclined to put all the Church finances, including missions, into a single budget, and raise the whole amount by a single subscription. This looks easy, but generally works poorly. One trouble with it is that while local congregational needs are all included, probably only a fraction of the missionary obligations of the Church are included. The "apportionment," or "quota," or "assessment," or "average," may perhaps be included in such a budget, and for some congregations this is doing fairly well.

But many will need to go away beyond such mechanical limitations if the Church as a whole does her work adequately. It is well to meet all local church expenses by the budget plan. But when it comes to missions, our ambition should be to lead the congregation to its maximum measure of co-operation in spreading the Kingdom of Christ. To this end the claims of our own country for missionary effort should have special agitation at some favorable period of the year, and the claims of the non-Christian world should have special agitation at some other favorable period. In each case, with the full case before them, the whole congregation should be led to decide on its financial response to these great and urgent claims. After this process is gone through thoroughly once, the response may be so generous and satisfactory that it can be kept at that level with much less effort, year after year. But it will take separate education, and a thorough-going personal canvass, to put the missionary work on a satisfactory basis.

## VI. How to Maintain and Increase the Missionary Spirit When Once Aroused.

The only way to maintain one's interest is to keep increasing one's knowledge of the subject. It cannot be too often reiterated that facts are fuel for feeding the missionary fires. It is also important that people discover information by their own effort. It is one thing to pour information into people. It is another thing for people to find the same information through personal investigation. The first is necessary perhaps as a means to the second. But it should be our study always to promote investigation by others.

Essential to the promotion of study is the planning for opportunities on which men can tell what they have learned. "Expression deepens impression." Teachers always learn faster than their scholars.

Many a person has never understood or mastered a subject until called upon to teach it.

Missionary Reading Circles and Mission Study Classes can be used to great advantage in promoting both investigation and expression. The whole plane of conversation has been radically altered in certain congregations and communities by the organization of such classes. New fields of thought and suggestion have come into view, and a greatly broadened intellectual horizon has been gained. Mission Study Classes have produced wonderful results among women and young people. It is hoped that they may yet become popular among men.

But of all regular means of maintaining and increasing missionary interest among men, probably the most important is a church service once each month, at which men speak on various missionary fields or other assigned missionary topics. It will ordinarily be the mid-week service, but may well take the place of the evening church service in many places. Quite a number of men should take part in each meeting, rather than having long addresses by one or two. If half a dozen men, each assigned to study one mission field like Korea, China or Africa, will report, in five minutes each, the things they have been able to learn about that country during the past month, it is surprising how much fresh information will be gathered and presented. The Missionary Committee should make these monthly meetings the object of constant study. The programmes for them should be prepared long in advance, and speakers provided. Many speakers will require counsel as to where to find information. The Committee should examine all available missionary literature, and refer speakers to the books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., where material can be found. Occasionally an outside speaker may be used, but as a rule it will be best to use the men of the congregation.

Time should be left at each of these meetings for a season of prayer. The best prayer periods always occur when there is some real occasion for intercession. There will be matters of large importance for praise and prayer at each of these meetings, if the Committee is alert to discover them.

### The Use of Missionary Literature.

Many of the missionary books are full of fascinating interest and information. Several new ones are coming from the press every month. The pamphlet literature on missions is also gaining greatly in volume and virility. A wise Missionary Committee will devote a great deal of thought to the problem of getting this literature read widely in the congregation. A few times each year a first-rate pamphlet should be given to every family in the church. It is best to distribute such literature personally, so it can be personally recommended. This will insure its being read.

### Agitation of Systematic Giving.

An occasional meeting should be devoted to the question of Systematic Giving. The best literature on the subject should be secured and distributed. The reasons why God has made his work dependent on our gifts, the motives for giving, the best methods of giving, and the spiritual blessings of giving, should all be made clear. It is better, from an educational view-point, to discuss these questions on their merits, and as related to character and life, rather than in view of some specific collection.

### All Educational Effort Related.

The Missionary Committee should see to it that every department of the Church has adequate missionary agitation, including the Young People's Society

and the Sunday School. Each of these organizations should have its own separate Missionary Committee. But all of the Missionary Committees in connection with the Church should work in fullest harmony and co-operation with each other.

Many Sunday Schools are adopting the plan of giving all their offerings to missionary purposes, the running expenses of the school being assumed by the congregation. This plan has enormous educational and financial advantages. Any ordinary school will soon multiply its gifts if wisely cultivated along these lines. The general financial showing of the congregation will also be far better at the end of the year than by the old method of having the children pay for their own supplies out of their regular offerings.

## VII. How to Promote Prayer for Missions and Missionaries.

There are three outstanding objects of prayer in connection with missions. 1. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 2. That the Lord of the harvest will thrust forth the needed laborers; and 3. Prayer for the laborers after they have been sent.

The answer to these prayers involves many other related questions, such as,

(*a*) The spiritual condition of the Church.

(*b*) The Right Conception of Christian Stewardship.

(*c*) The Correct Interpretation of the Great Commission.

(*d*) The Compassion of Christ for His Lost Sheep.

(*e*) The Missionary Boards.

(*f*) The Native Churches and Leaders.

(*g*) The Problem of Church Unity, etc., etc.

Prayer gains power by definiteness. The Missionary Committee should aim to set specific objects of

prayer before the people continually. At each monthly meeting, some definite occasions of praise and objects of prayer should be mentioned. If the audience is given an opportunity, it will generally mention several such objects. So far as possible, individuals should be led to adopt some particular missionary as an object of prayer, to be remembered habitually. Every missionary who is sent out should have the prayer backing of fifty or more people. In this way their practical efficiency can be vastly multiplied.

Of all definite commands of Christ, probably no one is more neglected than his command to "Pray the Lord of the harvest to thrust out laborers." Thousands more are urgently needed. Yet his one suggestion for meeting the need is generally either ignored, or put into a subordinate place. Wherever it is taken seriously, and obeyed, every problem is solved. The workers are found. In many cases they are among those who are praying for workers. The money is found. No one can pray workers out, without wanting also to send them out. What we need supremely is a spirit of prayer. What the missionaries crave most of all is a praying church behind them.

Some Mission Boards publish Prayer Calendars, with a definite object or person to be prayed for each day. A prayerful study by the committee of how to promote prayer for missions, will lead to some practical methods being put into operation.

## VIII. How to Inaugurate the Laymen's Missionary Movement in a Community.

The Laymen's Missionary Movement is "an inspiration, not an administration." It is a Movement, rather than an organization. It does not organize the men of a congregation or city into any new society. Wherever possible, it works through organizations already in existence.

Its aim is to have an energetic and efficient Missionary Committee in every congregation. It is believed that this is all the missionary organization needed or desirable inside the congregation. To see that such Committees are actually appointed and at work, and to co-operate with them in a general advance on the part of all churches, it is desirable to have in every city, town and community, a Co-operating Committee of the Laymen's Missionary Movement. The members of this Committee should be laymen, representing all of the leading denominations found in the community. Three men from each denomination make a satisfactory working Committee. It should have power to add to its number as suitable men are discovered or developed.

If possible, the members of this Committee should be nominated by the men of their own denomination. The Ministers' Association of a city sometimes takes the initiative in securing the appointment of such a Committee.

### Necessity of Religious Statistics.

The first work of this Committee is to compile a table of statistics showing these four facts for the churches of their city or community:

1. The Church Membership (Communicants).

2. The amount spent on Congregational Expenses, including salaries.

3. The amount spent for Educational and Missionary work of all kinds at Home.

4. The Amount Spent Abroad.

These facts will reveal at a glance the offerings of the people for Church purposes, and the general directions in which it has been spent. Such a knowledge of the situation is essential to any well-directed advance in missionary giving. The Committee should keep a

record of these figures—by congregations and denominations—for permanent reference, as well as for immediate use.

The next step is a public meeting of the men of all churches for the presentation of the purpose and method of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, by capable speakers. Experience has proved the wisdom of getting men together around the supper table, at this important initial meeting. This is a convenience, for men can come straight from business, and save the time of going home and returning. The plan is more likely to insure the attendance of many men who should certainly be present. It also promotes a spirit of fellowship which cannot be produced in any other way.

A simple supper, served by the ladies of the churches, at a reasonable price,—as their contribution to the success of the work, and not as a means of making money,—is the plan recommended for most places.

If at all possible, the supper should be in some large public hall, rather than in a church building. It is an advantage, however, to have the supper served by the ladies of the churches.

The earnest attempt should be made to secure the presence of every church officer in the city, and as many other of the strong laymen as possible. The tickets for this supper should be on sale weeks in advance, and should all be sold before the day on which the supper is to occur, so that it may be known exactly how many are to be provided for. The supper should be at a popular price, and the largest available hall in the city should be filled. In Toronto, a supper of this sort was served to 1,050 men, in a skating rink, at fifty cents a plate.

The supper should be held early, and gotten through with promptly, so as to give plenty of time for speaking and discussion. It should always be kept in mind

that the supper is a convenience, and not to be magnified, or be allowed to consume too much time. It should be served not later than 6.30 o'clock if possible.

Two solid addresses are enough, in addition to the opening remarks of the Chairman. The addresses should be followed by free expression from local men as to what should be done. Five or six men, in a couple of minutes each, can add greatly to the force of this initial meeting.

The summary of statistics for the community should either be printed, in convenient form for distribution, or should be displayed on a large, specially prepared banner at the public meetings.

Before the first meeting closes, a representative Committee should be appointed to study carefully the resources and conditions of the Church life of the city, and bring in to a later meeting some recommendations as to the practical missionary policy to be adopted, together with the methods of realizing it.

In all ordinary cases, a Men's Mass Meeting should be held on the following evening, for a further presentation of the subject and also for discussion of the report of this Committee. At this meeting a permanent Co-operating Committee of the Laymen's Missionary Meeting may be arranged for by this Committee. Once each year, one or two well planned meetings should be held, to review the progress of the past year, and adopt further plans for discharging the Church's full responsibility to the unevangelized.

One or two day-sessions should also be arranged wherever possible, for the consideration of practical methods of promoting missionary interest and securing larger contributions. The topics discussed would be such as are considered in this handbook, enriched by as wide a range as possible of observation and practical experience.

Three Sub-committees of this Co-operating Committee are desirable; one on Deputation work, one on Literature, and one on Publicity.

The Committee on Deputation Work should arrange for speakers to present the Movement wherever there are openings. The last church should be reached and the last man enlisted.

The Committee on Literature should make a thorough study of missionary books, and especially pamphlets to recommend to congregational Missionary Committee for distribution. They should see to it that the Public Library is well supplied with missionary books and should take steps to have special attention called to them.

The Publicity or Press Committee should study to get the cause of Missions popularly presented through the secular press.

The real crux of the missionary problem is in the individual congregation. Until proper educational and financial methods are put into operation there, the work will be but preliminary. The objective of the Laymen's Missionary Movement in any community, therefore, is to assist each individual congregation to reach its highest missionary efficiency. As congregations succeed in making worthy advances in their offerings, report of this should be made, with the methods used, to the headquarters of the Laymen's Movement, and through the press to the widest possible constituency. Success should be published for the encouragement and guidance of others who need this stimulus.

After a city or community has set before itself a definite missionary policy, it should be made operative in every congregation. To this end, the principles of this handbook should be put into practice. A strong Missionary Committee should be appointed, if not already in existence, in each congregation. Laymen should be used, both in the regular Church services,

and at special men's meetings, to assist the pastor in arousing interest. The congregational Men's Supper is proving an invaluable help in this connection. If the men of a congregation can be got together for an evening's free discussion of their own congregation's missionary responsibility, it is a sort of educational machinery difficult to surpass. After one or two experienced men have spoken, the meeting should take the form of an informal conference about what the immediate missionary policy of the Church should be. This democratic consideration of the matter is the finest sort of preparation for the personal canvass, by Committees of men, which should follow at once and be completed within ten days or two weeks at most.

It is not best as a rule to ask men to make their own subscriptions at this supper, unless there is a spontaneous desire to do so. It will be helpful, however, if some of the men who have decided to do far more than ever before, will say so, indicating their purposes as clearly as they may be willing to do.

Every Co-operating Committee should keep in touch constantly with the headquarters of the Laymen's Missionary Movement. Suggestions may often be received which will be of great practical value.

## IX. One Way to Develop Lay Leadership in the Church.

To persuade laymen that the Church needs them in its business is the first condition of drawing them into activity and developing them into leaders. The unfortunate impression is widespread among laymen that all the Church wants of them is their attendance at the church services and their financial co-operation. The divine ideal is, *"To every man his work."* Paul goes so far as to declare that God has a specially prepared task for each one of his children. "We are his work-

manship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them."—Eph. 2: 10.

Very few men ever become leaders in Christian work without having responsibility thrust upon them in the first instance. As men carry responsibility, they learn how to carry more. The school of experience is the only one that produces capable leadership. What every man needs is some one to discover him and so help him to discover himself. Mr. Moody's formula will always be true: "It is better to set ten men at work than to do ten men's work." God planned that His work should be done through human co-operation, not because He could not have got it done in some other way, but because in the doing of it, men are produced who cannot be developed by any other process. We shall accomplish most for the kingdom, as we give ourselves deliberately to setting men at work for others. Only as Christians work can they grow.

Not only is there something for every man to do; there is also something that every man can do. That Church is most alive and fruitful whose every member is a part of the conscious machinery of God for the doing of His work.

One of the greatest opportunities of Theological Seminaries is to teach their students the fine art of setting men at work. Nothing is more needed by the minister than his ability. The marvellous growth of the Young Men's Christian Association during the past generation has proved that laymen can do things. But the process is only begun. If the millions of men who compose the male membership of the Church of Christ could be set at work, the result would be beyond all estimation and imagination. The Church would be perfectly resistless, if it would thus release its potential energy.

At the present time, nothing else is proving so generally effective in enlisting men in active Christian service as the appeal and objective for which the Laymen's Missionary Movement stands. Explain it as we may, numbers of men are being helped to see the significance and value of all spiritual matters, as they never had seen them before, by the call to evangelize the world. Not only are they giving of their time, energy and treasure in greatly increased measure for the reaching of the unevangelized, but they are becoming eager for every needed advance in the Christianization of our own civilization. The subject of missions is so connected with commerce and politics, and so related to all fundamental human interests, that it appeals to men from many different angles, when comprehensively presented.

It is also comparatively easy to get laymen to express themselves on the importance of proper system in missionary finance. Many of them have an experience on systematic and proportionate giving that it would do them and others good to have them relate.

There are many phases of the missionary problem which are of interest to men and upon which they can readily be led to speak. Once led into activity in the presentation of this subject, they are ready for any other practical Christian activity that presents itself. Already hundreds of efficient lay workers have been discovered and developed in this way. The practical plans proposed in this handbook are proving among the most fruitful methods ever used in developing lay leadership in the Church.